



News at 12

Serving Floyd, Johnson, Knott, Lawrence, Letcher, Martin, and Pike counties

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Highway District 12
Kentucky Transportation
Cabinet

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Marine Cpl. Jonathan Tackett, son of Minnie superintendent Glen Tackett, in midst of Fallujah offensive as a machine gunnist

The new "Marlboro Man," as the media calls him, James Blake Miller of Jonancy in Pike County, isn't the only Eastern Kentucky soldier fighting in Fallujah.

But, like Miller's family, the parents of Marine Cpl. Jonathan Tackett of Teaberry watch television news to see if they can catch a glimpse of their 21-year-old son.

"That's the only way right now we know if he's okay or not," said his father, Glen Tackett superintendent of the state highway maintenance garage at Minnie in Floyd County.

"We've seen him on CNN twice and a neighbor said he was on Fox, too. He's just on there for a few seconds, but we know it's him. We've taken digital photos off the television, so we can be sure. The quality isn't the best, but we know it's him and that he's alive."

Jonathan is a member of the 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines,

31st Expeditionary Unit, Alpha Company. He is a machine gunnist with three and a half years' service. "He's supposed to get out in April," his father said. "It's been at least three weeks since we've heard from him because he hasn't been able to contact us since the fighting started (in Fallujah)."

He has two sisters, Renee Hinkle, who lives in Michigan, and Tera Tackett of Teaberry. His grandmother is Mearl Tackett of Teaberry. While they wait for Jonathan's next phone call, so does his girlfriend, Samantha Newsome.

As a small comfort in the meantime, Glen and his wife, Willa, who runs the family store, Tackett's Variety at Grethel, know that other people do care. "Betsy Layne High School is sending him a care package," Glen said. "And Old Hickory, which is one of my wife's suppliers at the store, fixed up a box of foot powder and cream, face cream, and things like

that and sent it to her to send to Jonathan. He might not get it for a while, but when he does, we know he'll appreciate it."

When his classmates at Betsy Layne High School were going through commencement in the spring of 2001, Jonathan was already a soldier. Instead of finishing with his class, he chose to get his GED and join the Marines. The 31st Marine — see page five

Harry Morgan played Officer Gannon on Dragnet. Cathy Dye and David Coddle were the first to phone in the right answer! They each won a KYTC thermal mug.

Who played Jethro on The Beverly Hillbillies? The first person to call and leave me a voice mail wins his/her choice of a D-12 cap or t-shirt (one winner from among folks who have computers and one from among those who don't, to make it fair). Call Sara George at 433-7791 extension 299 or on my cell phone at 424-8044! Good luck!



Jonathan Tackett cleans his weapon during a quiet moment in Kuwait; the 21-year-old Floyd County native, a machine gunner, was in the midst of the battle to capture Fallujah from Sunni insurgents.

(Photo by Staff Sargent J.D. Cress)

Our Lives and Times . . .

Please remember in your prayers and thoughts the following D-12 employees:

- **Lois Taylor**, whose husband, Carl, died Friday, October 8 at Pikeville Medical Center.
- **Libby Carty** and her daughter, **Callie**. Callie's father, Charles (Libby's former husband) died October 8 in Lexington.
- **Vergil Webb**, whose aunt, Bertha Webb Scott, died Friday, October 22.
- **Jim Anthony**, who works at the D-12 Equipment Garage. His father, Robert Wayne Anthony, died Friday, November 26. Funeral services were held Tuesday, November 30 at Community Funeral Home at Raccoon in Pike County.

Resident Maintenance Engineer **Tim Spencer** and his wife, Denise, learned recently that they will be having twin boys in January! Congratulations! Better catch up on your sleep now!

D-12 Maintenance Engineers have been reassigned. **Frank Castle** now has Floyd County; **Tim Spencer** is responsible for Lawrence, Martin, and Johnson; **Greg Preece** has Knott and Letcher; and **Joe Stanley** is in Pike County.

Sr. Kathleen at St. David's Mission in Floyd County called several weeks ago to let us know that she and her colleagues "deeply appreciate the work of the Floyd County Maintenance Crew at Allen in cleaning out the ditchlines in the David area."



District 12 golfers, from left, John Montgomery, Jerry D. Lowe, Bud Newsome, Tim Spencer, Tim Dye, Greg Tackett, Gene Layne, and Bud Akers. Not pictured, Paxton Weddington, Darold Slone, Joe Stanley, and Jim Gullett.



While attending Operations annual meeting at General Butler State Resort Park, Frank Castle got to drive the pace car at Kentucky Speedway. He was a natural! Look out, Indianapolis, Frank may be on his way west!

John P. Sammons, Jerry D. Lowe, W. Joe Stanley, and flatlander **Jim Simpson** won the annual golf tournament held in conjunction with Operations yearly statewide meeting held at General Butler in Carrollton.

Congratulations! We are proud of you!

The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.

— Eleanor Roosevelt

Bud Newsome champion of D-12 golfers' six-course tour

Thirteen golfers from District 12 put together their own tour this year, playing six different courses over a period of six months during their spare time.

Overall standings were determined by an individual's best four scores of this six tournaments played. Bud Newsome, tour champion, won the first two tournaments. The first was at the Paintsville Country Club and the second at Eagle Ridge at Yatesville Lake.

Gene Layne won the third outing, which was a Wasito Winds at Pine Mountain State Park in West Virginia.

The fourth tournament, at Stonecrest in Prestonsburg, was captured by Tim Dye. The fifth and sixth contests both went to Bud Akers, who won at Twisted Gun in Gilbert, West Virginia, and Hidden Cove at Grayson Lake State Park.

Second place in the final Smackdown Tour standings went to Bud Akers, with Tim Dye coming in third and Gene Layne and Jerry Lowe ending up in a tie for fourth place.

Westfall, Smith, Tackett chase mother up US 23; McCune stays with boy

District 12 men make daring rescue of tyke left by accident

This particular Tuesday started out like another normal work day for Mark Westfall, Harry Smith, Joe Justice, and Rich McCune. But a stop at Chevron Autobahn on US 23 North of Pikeville turned the day into anything but usual.

After filling up with gas for a trip to Martin County, Mark, who was driving, went inside to pay. He opened the door for a youngster on the way. "He smiled at me real big and walked on in," Mark recalled.

When Mark was back in the car "fiddling with the gas receipt," they all saw the same little boy running after a van, screaming. "It's a wonder he wasn't hit (by some other vehicle)," Mark said, pointing out that the access road from the Autobahn to US 23 is usually quite crowded. "He did trip and fall. She (his mother) pulled right out and didn't stop. The look on the boy's face was one of pure terror. He turned around with his mouth wide open, pointing and screaming."

The Fearless Foursome from D-12 spring into action. Rich jumped out of the back seat, across the hood of the car and stayed with the boy, talking to him and getting him calmed down. "He was terrified at first," Rich said. "I have three little boys and it was easy (to talk to him). He was torn all to pieces the first five or 10 minutes. It took 20 minutes or so before they got back. I found out his name was Colin and he

was six years old. He was from Tennessee and didn't know his phone number. He and his mother and brother were on their way home from visiting his papaw. We talked about girlfriends and soccer."

Mark, with Harry riding shotgun and Joe in the back, took off after the van, which was barreling up US 23 "in a tremendous hurry," Mark said. "She definitely exceeded the speed limit. Right before Mullins School, we finally got her to pull over on the shoulder. I ran a red light to get up with her."

The woman thought both her sons were asleep while she paid at the pump for her gas. The 14-year-old was in the

front seat. The younger boy was lucky." in the back. Apparently, he got out from the other side and went inside to use the restroom. "She had no idea her baby wasn't in that van. I said, 'M'am, did you forget something?' She looked at her older boy. They both looked puzzled. I said, 'Your son?' She looked again at her older boy, and I said, 'No, your baby boy.' Then she looked in the back and realized he wasn't there. She went hysterical, started crying and all." She followed Mark and Co. back to the Autobahn. "They were hugging each other when we pulled out. I've got one his age, and it was scary. If he hadn't tripped, he would have run out in traffic or maybe under the side of the van. He was

Yes, he was lucky that four Good Samaritans were in the right place at the right time! Good work, guys!

The Central Kentucky Blood Center recently sent a thank-you message to District 12: "Thanks for being the type who gives!" for our Blood Drive at the District Office.



From left, Mark Westfall, Project Manager; Rich McCune, Environmental Coordinator; and Joe Justice, Right-of-Way agent. Not pictured, Harry Smith, Right-of-Way agent.

Traffic Crew keeps track of thousands of road signs; keeps motorists on track

Editor's Note: This is the fourth in a series of features about the people who work at District 12. The first three covered the Lawrence, Martin, and Johnson County maintenance garages.

If you're driving on any state road in District 12 and see a sign that's bent or missing, or a lane that doesn't seem like the lines are quite right, don't just ignore it. Call Roger Tackett or Steve Roberts. Their crews are responsible for signs and striping in all seven counties of the district. They can't be everywhere at once, so they depend on us to let them know if there's a problem.

And the reason they can't be everywhere at once is because they are usually busier than a mother with quintuplets! For example, from June 1 through August 3 this year, barely two months' time, the sign crew installed 882 posts, 492 inserts, and a whopping 2,271 signs. The roadside markers cover everything from littering fines to speed limits and stop signs to green signs that direct motorists to various communities.

These are the men who make sure that folks who drive state-maintained roads in District 12 have the correct information to get where they are going safely and as quickly as the law allows:

Roger Lee Tackett, a veteran of more than 29 years with state government. A Superintendent II, Roger attended Virgie High School. He supervises personnel in both the striping and sign crews. He and his wife, Debra Cheryl, have one daughter, 21-year-old Tiffany Leigh Tackett.

Steve Roberts, Superintendent I, has worked at District 12 for two decades. His father, the late Leo Roberts, was

foreman at the Floyd County Maintenance Garage. His mother, the late Lydia May Roberts, taught school in Floyd County. Steve himself has been a parent representative on the Betsy Layne Elementary Site-Based Council

five years. He and his wife, Anita, have two sons, 17-year-old Adam and 11-year-old Andrew. They attend the Betsy Layne

— see page six



D-12's Striping Crew, from left, Steve Roberts, Roger Tackett, William Justice, Jamey Slone, Stevie Slone, and Melvin Wilson Jr.



Traffic & Operations Sign Crew, clockwise from left front, Steve Roberts, Randy Kender, Chris Kender, Patrick Yates, Roger Tackett, Robby Thompson, and Stevie Kender.

Glen Tackett's son with Marines in Fallujah

(Continued from page one)

Expeditionary Unit is based in Okinawa. Jonathan has seen active duty in Seoul, South Korea; the Philippines; Kuwait; and now Iraq. Before Monday, November 15, at least 38 American soldiers and six Iraqi nationals were among reported fatalities. According to Fox News, about 275 US soldiers had been wounded, but more than 60 of those had returned to duty. US official estimated more than 1200 Sunni Muslim insurgents had been killed.

According to CNN, Fallujah was considered a rebel command-and-control center for the rest of Iraq, and a base for Jordanian militant Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's terror network.

Military officials estimated that 3,000 to 5,000 insurgents may have been inside the city of 300,000, but many are thought to have fled before the planned offensive began. Most of the civilian population also left the city before the fighting began.

In April, Marines attacked Fallujah after four US private security contractors were killed and mutilated. The US-led forces pulled back and established a local Fallujah brigade to restore peace to the city, but in the summer, that effort fell apart and insurgents solidified

control in Fallujah, leading to the recent fighting.

On Tuesday, November 16, media reports indicated that the United States and Iraqi forces have secured the city. Cpl. Jonathan Tackett is one of the US Marines who made that happen. His family is proud.

"He's my youngest child and my only boy," Glen Tackett said. "We'd be proud of him no matter what he decided to do with his life, but it really makes you feel good inside to know that he is fighting for other people's freedom. We take so many things for granted in this country that other people in the world don't have, like the right to go to church, the right to vote, the right to say whatever we want to about the government without fear of being arrested. Every human being should be treated with respect by their government, and that's what Jonathan is fighting for. We just pray he comes home safe -- and soon!"

Former classmates and friends who want to send Cpl. Tackett a card or letter should send them to the following address: Cpl. Jonathan G. Tackett, 1st BN, 3rd Marines, A Company, 2nd PLT Unit 44020, FPOAP 96607-4020.

WE'RE ON THE WEB!

<http://www.kytc.state.ky.us/D12/>

On November 11 Cathy Dye, Administrative Specialist, Operations, bagged her third deer. She and husband, Tim, a member of the D-12 Bridge Crew, went hunting in Floyd County.



Sara George, D-12 Information Officer, presents tips for engineers in the KYTC Project Managers Academy. George recently finished her fourth PMA as a speaker about how Information Officers can help in the Public Involvement Process. This photo was taken at Rough River State Resort Park by former D-12 employee Steve Damron.



Mandy Justice and John Michael Johnson spent the day at Johns Creek Elementary on October 21 for their annual Career Day. They talked to eighth graders about careers in transportation, especially the requirements for a KYTC scholarship.

Striping, Sign crews keep motorists on right track (from page five)

Church of Christ. Steve treasures “precious time with my family” and is involved in various youth programs such as Little League basketball, baseball, and football. “Instilling good moral values in our children is a must,” he says. “That, and teaching them to find pleasure in the simple things in life. Our children are our future.”

STRIPING CREW

William Justice started his career with D-12 in June 1997 as a janitor. An alumnus of Pikeville High School who earned his GED 10 years after leaving school, he joined the Traffic crew in 1999 as an Operator I. He is now an Operator II. When he’s not helping the Sign Crew, he works with the Striping Crew (both crews work bath and forth to help each other when necessary). His wife, Alice, works for the Cabinet for Families and Children and takes care of her mother when she’s not on the job. Alice attends the Old Regular Baptist Church; William attends the Church of Christ.

Jamey Slone, Equipment Operator II, lives at Hurricane of Kimper in Pike County. A graduate of Pike Central, he spent three years at the Shelby Maintenance Garage before joining the Traffic Crew. He and his wife, Heather, have one daughter,, two-year-old Sidnee. He is the son of Shirley and Donald Slone and has a five-year-old brother, Dylan.

Stevie Slone, Jamey’s first cousin, also lives at Hurricane of Kimper. An Equipment Operator V, he’s worked at District 12 for 11 years. A member of Johns Creek High School’s last graduating class (1993), he is a Roads Scholar and Roads Master. Stevie and his wife, Lynne, have two children, eight-year-old April and six-year-old Steven Tyler. His parents are Ann and

Mack Slone of Kimper.

Melvin Wilson Jr., the crew’s only published author (see *News at 12* volumn 3, issue 6), is a graduate of Hargrave Military School in Chatam, Virginia, and Kentucky College of Business, where he earned a degree in Management Information Systems. He started with KYTC in 1987 in the Utilities Department, went to Traffic for five years, did a seven-year stint in Preconstruction’s field crew, and came back to Traffic in 1999. Melvin lives in Pikeville with his wife, Rachelle. His hobbies are astronomy, writing, and music (he plays drums and piano). “I just love working with these guys (his co-workers in Traffic),” he says. “They’re a true team, and great friends, always willing to help you.”

SIGN CREW

Daris Stevie Kender, Operator V, started more than eight years ago on the striping crew at Phelps. A Primitive Baptist preacher and assistant moderator at two churches, Stevie is a graduate of Phelps High School. He and his wife of 21 years, Penny, have three children, 20-year-old Christopher, 18-year-old Kayla, and eight-year-old Kelsie. He is the son of Daris and Barbara Kender of Phelps.

Randy Kender, Stevie’s brother and an Equipment Operator IV, is coming upon his 13th anniversary with KYTC. The thing he likes best about his job is getting to work in different places. A graduate of Phelps High School, Randy likes to hunt coon, rabbit, and turkey. He worked more than four years at the Phelps Maintenance Garage before transferring to the striping crew. He and his wife, Jenny, married for 11 years, have one son, six-year-old Jared, a student at Phelps Elementary. His parents are also Daris and Barbara

Kender of Phelps. He attends Peter Creek Primitive Baptist Church.

Chris Kender, Stevie’s son and Randy’s nephew, will soon celebrate his third anniversary with District 12, about a week before his third wedding anniversary. He and his wife, Delena, live at Phelps and are graduates of Phelps High School. Chris likes working in seven different counties, especially since he can discover a lot of places for deer and turkey hunting (he particularly likes Lawrence County for that reason). Chris and his wife are members of the Peter Creek Primitive Baptist Church.

Robby Thompson actually makes all the signs that everyone else installs. District 12 is the only highway district which still has its own sign shop. All the other districts have their signs made in Frankfort. An 18-year veteran with KYTC, graduated from Mullins High School in 1972. He and his wife, Janet, who works at Wayne Supply, have three children, Paul Randall Hurley of Morristown, Tennessee; 21-year-old Whitney Thompson Hamilton; and 27-year-old Jody Thompson, KVE Region 10’s canine officer. They also have three grandchildren and another one on the way. The son of Mary Evelyn Thompson and the late Honsell Thompson, Robby is a ham radio operator and a licensed child safety seat installation and inspection specialist. He says the best part of his job is “keeping these other men on their toes.”

Patrick “Toby” Yates, Operator I with almost three years’ experience, is another D-12 legacy. His father, Gary Yates, retired earlier this year from District 12 after 31 years in Preconstruction/Design. His mother is Vonda Yates and his wife’s name is Ashley.

295 years of service to Commonwealth honored through career certificates

Eighteen employees of Highway District 12 were recognized recently for a combined 295 years of service to the citizens of the Commonwealth.

Sharing the honors, presented by Chief District Engineer Danl L. Hall, were:

Thirty Years
Roe Sammons

Twenty-Five Years
Jimpie Slone Jr.

Twenty Years
Hugh Sammons
Gregory C. Wills

Ten Years
Kermit Boleyn
Glenn Dobson
Harold D. Kincer
Richard S. McCune
Douglas R. Scaggs
Jerry K. Spears

Five Years
Mary Westfall-Holbrook
Orlance B. Lamb
Garland Rogers
Michael P. Slone
W. Joseph Stanley
Scotty D. Tackett
Nelson Thompson
Barry M. Ward



Jimpie Slone Jr., left with CDE Danl Hall, has worked at District 12 for 25 years. He is a member of the Shelbiana Maintenance Crew in Pike County.



Above, from left, Kermit Boleyn, Glenn Dobson, Douglas R. Scaggs, CDE Danl Hall, Rich McCune, and Jerry Spears. Below, from left, Michael Slone, Garland Rogers, Scotty Tackett, Hall, Nelson Thompson, and Mary Westfall-Holbrook.

